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And the many others who have helped us make this magazine





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# OXFORD BROOKES LONDON SHOW

POSTGRADUATE ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION

## 2015

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Welcome to issue one of OSA, an independent, student led magazine and the first ever to emerge from Oxford School of Architecture.

From its origins as the Doric Club, a group of Oxford students who petitioned the University to allow them to study architecture,\* to the institution we're proud to be a part of today, OSA has always been a product of the initiative, drive and ambition of its students and we've worked very hard over the last nine months to ensure that this student-led ethos is represented in the magazine.

Every element of the production of the magazine has been approached collaboratively, from the format, colour theme and printing methods, to the way we crowd-funded our start-up costs and debated our logo, the frequency of publication, values, design principles and the themes for each issue – engaging with as many students as possible. We've really enjoyed meeting and working with students from different studios and courses and we're always keen for more members to join us, no matter your experience or skills, so if you're interested please find us in the studio.

From its inception, the magazine has been set up with the intention of fostering an even stronger community within the school,

by providing a platform for opinion, critique, dialogue and debate between students, staff, alumni and friends of the school.

The theme for our first issue is Frontiers. We asked students, staff and alumni to consider the question of where the boundaries of our architecture lie and how they are being expanded. We've been delighted with the responses which celebrate the blurring of the boundaries of our discipline and demonstrate the myriad ways in which architects, educators, designers and journalists are pushing at the edge of their practices.

While we felt for the magazine to be relevant we ought to reflect the timings of the academic calendar, we also think it's really important that the magazine is not simply reflective of the school, but that it can a platform for advocating issues which we think are important for students to consider. In this spirit the theme of next issue is exploring (and celebrating) Failure – see page 62 for the call for abstracts.

Finally, thank-you for buying issue one of OSA – without an audience we wouldn't have a magazine. We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we did making it.

### **The Editors**

Rob Dutton, Lauren Kehoe & Louisa Preece

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\* At the time Architecture was considered too vocational for such an esteemed academic establishment, but rumour has it in recent years they've tried to poach OSA from Oxford Brookes as it'd be an easy way to 'one-up' Cambridge. We're happy where we are.



Matzine  
-13-

"Jargon"

OBBY

No 1 | Autumn 2014 | The Bartlett School of Architecture

Fulcrum

VOLUME 100 • JUNE 27, 2014 • PARADIGMS

Fulcrum has pursued architecture and the third millennium (as its story-tellers) for three and a half years. It was inspired by the long history of AA student publications, those (at times) for a few years before dying with the graduation of their editors, the spirit of this transiency will not be institutionalized. We will decide what happens next.

is Occupy (LX 100). We at times feel the global social issues, as seen in Africa (10), as well as historical questions like the origins of capitalism (15). Ultimately though, we are most interested in architecture's philosophical representations, as with the 50th (100) or Freedom of Speech (102).

Fulcrum sought to display architecture in all its contexts: historically, aesthetically, technologically, economically — to both challenge its relationship to the media (100) and articulate the changing nature of the media (102). We always make positive contributions to theory (while not necessarily accepting its premises).

KERB

21

Journal of Landscape Architecture

2013

UNCHARTED TERRITORIES

Un/Spectacle

MAC

THIRTY NINE

MAG

# RENEGADE WRITERS

We spoke to [Jack Self](#), the editor of Fulcrum and [Regner Ramos](#), the editor of LOBBY, to see what drove them to publish, how they made their decisions about format and content, and the impact of their publications upon their schools.

Crossing frontiers is not only something we're documenting but something which we feel as an editorial team has been experienced in making this magazine. It's a first for our school and none of us have made a magazine before. As a result, instinct and experimentation have driven much of our production and design. We were keen to survey the landscape of student architectural publishing to see where OSA might fit and what we could learn from other student-led magazines.

We discovered a huge array of publications, from single sided pamphlets through to peer reviewed journals (with a rating of A\* for research excellence, no less). Some have published a single issue before disappearing again, others have been in print consistently

for over fifty years. Of all the publications we studied as precedents while making our own, Fulcrum (AA) and LOBBY (The Bartlett) were of particular interest as they were in many aspects complete opposites. Fulcrum was published weekly from 2011 – 2014. It was promptly shut down upon publishing their 100th issue in June of this year. LOBBY is a biannual magazine which at the time of writing is entering the final preparations for their launch in late September.

We thought it would be interesting to speak to the editors of these two publications in parallel to see how their projects were conceived, what they thought of the value of student publications, what they've offered their respective schools and how the editors, writers and readers of the publications have benefited from their involvement.



**Editorial Team:** 2 – 4

**Format:** A4

**# of Pages:** 1 (Double Sided)

**Frequency:** Weekly

**Price:** Free

**Process:** Risograph

**Finishing:** n/a

**Funding:** The AA Director's Tea Budget

**Editorial Team:** 18

**Format:** 24x17 cm

**# of Pages:** 130

**Frequency:** Biannual

**Price:** £10

**Process:** Lithography

**Finishing:** Perfect Binding

**Funding:** Grant from the Bartlett  
+ Advertising

## What's in a name?

A Fulcrum is metaphorically a tipping point, but its literally a pivot around the centre of a see-saw or a pulley. Fulcrum has always been two articles which are pivoting around the same subject.

The reason for this is very much because firstly it addresses the apprehension you have towards addressing other people, its about saying there's no right answer because they'll always be two of you speaking about the same subject and you're always going to be one next to the other, so there's no clear hierarchy.

Our school building doesn't have a lobby, a place for students to sit down and socialise and interact. So a metaphorical way, print LOBBY acts as the place where conversations and ideas are shared. LOBBY's sections are tailored and conceptualised after common spaces in our School's architecture building. The idea is to metaphorically 'walk' through the school of architecture as you flip through LOBBY's pages, going up and down through these sections whose content responds to the space they're in. It's also the area which mediates between the inside and the outside of the school.

## What drove you to publish?

Fulcrum had a very specific point when it started in 2011. We had a sense of frustration that although there were student protests about cuts to education budgets passing through Bedford Square, students at the AA had no idea of this, they had absolutely no engagement with the outside world.

I'm not surprised that LOBBY is the first publication in over twenty years – the timing coincides with our generations arrival into an architectural culture dominated by a completely apolitical starchitecture generation which is completely vapid and is a completely wasted generation, they rode one of the largest economic booms of the twentieth century and they did basically fuck all with it.

LOBBY is the first Bartlett publication in over twenty years – it was pretty much a clean slate and an opportunity for us to do something for ourselves and for the school that would hopefully make an impact. So at the beginning there was an idea that it would be a kind of Bartlett catalogue where most of the content would be student projects. So for us it was an opportunity just to do a magazine, some articles, some more academic essays,

It also was about making a place for students to talk to each other as much as a chance for us to experiment as editors and writers. The studios are also very separate from one another at the Bartlett so we really wanted to encourage dialogue between different students.



## What informed the content of each issue?

What you see with Fulcrum is a lot of the issues represent specific periods of time. We wanted to be topical, there's no point in a publication which is always about the past. We wanted not just to respond to changes which have come before but also to be propositional, which will pitch a particular vision of architecture. In 2011, which is my favourite year so far, there was a lot going on. In particular you had the Occupy Movement which we became very involved in and did a number of special issues on.

I don't like describing Fulcrum as radical in terms of trying to change the system but I'm a big fan of considering ourselves as renegades, or rebels acting outside the system, and using our voice as a way of informing our peers.

Well at the moment there's only one, but it's the first student led magazine the Bartlett have done in over two decades, so for us it's a really important magazine. It's the first one of this century that's going to be the voice of the Bartlett. We've always crafted it as an experiment, so what we've tried to do is to curate a really well rounded set of understandings and perspectives, on the theme of un/spectacle in architecture and see what people like, and take it from there for the second issue.

What's important to us is that we're not just another venue for criticism of the problem, We really want to tackle the architectural issues of today, by playing around with serious issues through humour, so it feels like more of a conversation.

## How did you choose your contributors?

One of the things I liked to do was to foster and promote student writing, but also to raise the profile of student writers by putting them with people who were really well established. Some of the things I really liked doing was to take someone very well respected, very high profile extinguished professor alongside someone who had never written before, and both articles were equally good, so you began to see a democracy of discourse in that sense.

We tried to get as many students from the Bartlett as possible involved so that the magazine is representational, it is the voice of the Bartlett. But because it's very hard to get students involved with something which is not well established, so that's where the contributions from outside the school came in. Going along with the metaphor of the building, these articles also start acting as the windows & doors into our School.

## Why publish in print and not on the web?

It's fundamentally about having a spatial – and even geographical – relationship between the content and the reader. In order to engage with it you have to pick it up. It's also a statement about the value of making and craft.

I think the thing for me is that actually it's very exciting to consider how our publication may evolve. It offers opportunities and possibilities which weren't there before it was printed. We really don't see print as any sort of limitation on our ambitions.

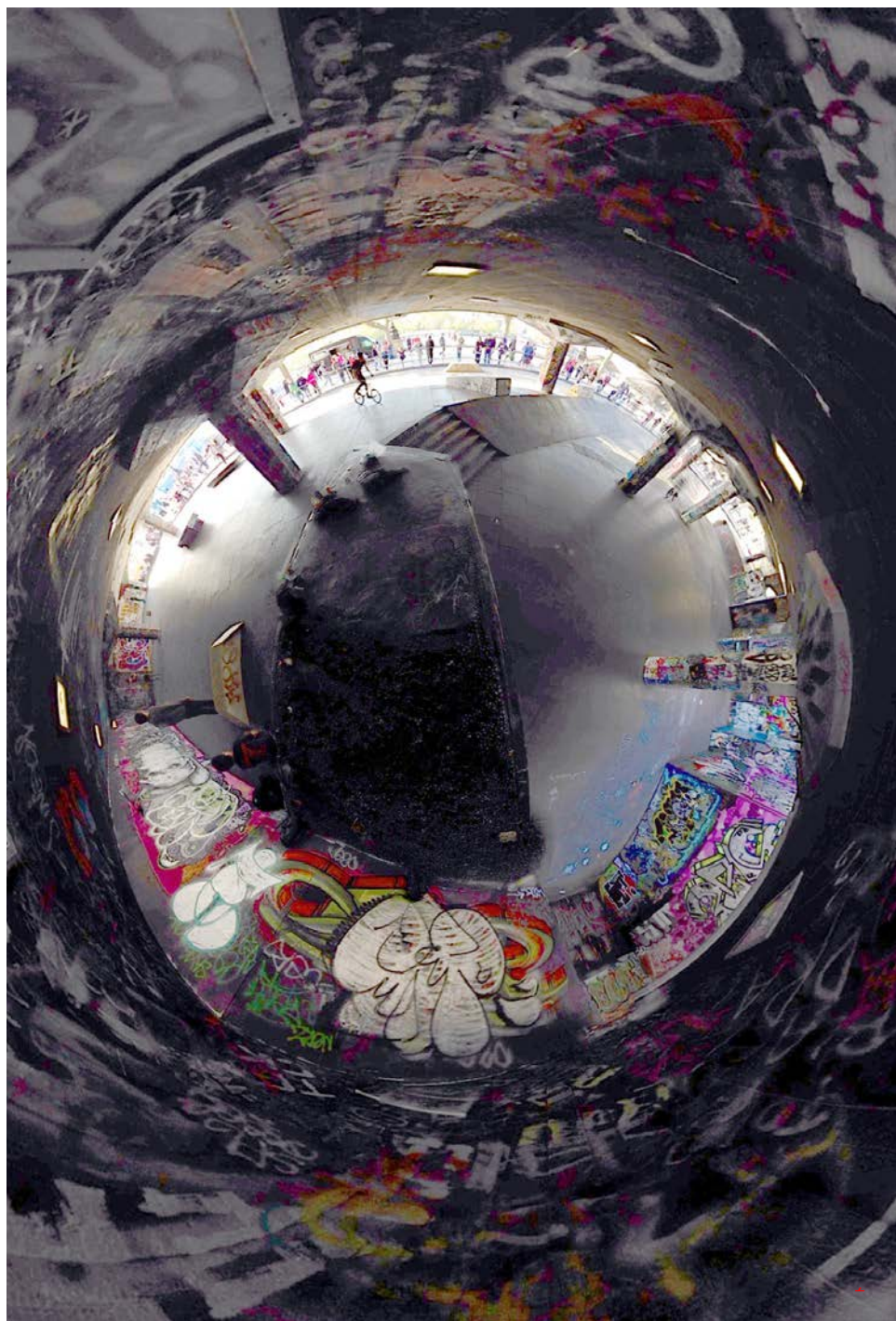
The complete archives of Fulcrum are available from <http://fulcrum.aaschool.com>

Issue One of LOBBY, Un/Spectacle, is available to buy from [www.bartlettlobby.com](http://www.bartlettlobby.com)



*Regner and Jack were interviewed by **Rob Dutton**, a final year MArchD student specialising in Advanced Architectural Design and Editor of OSA Magazine.*

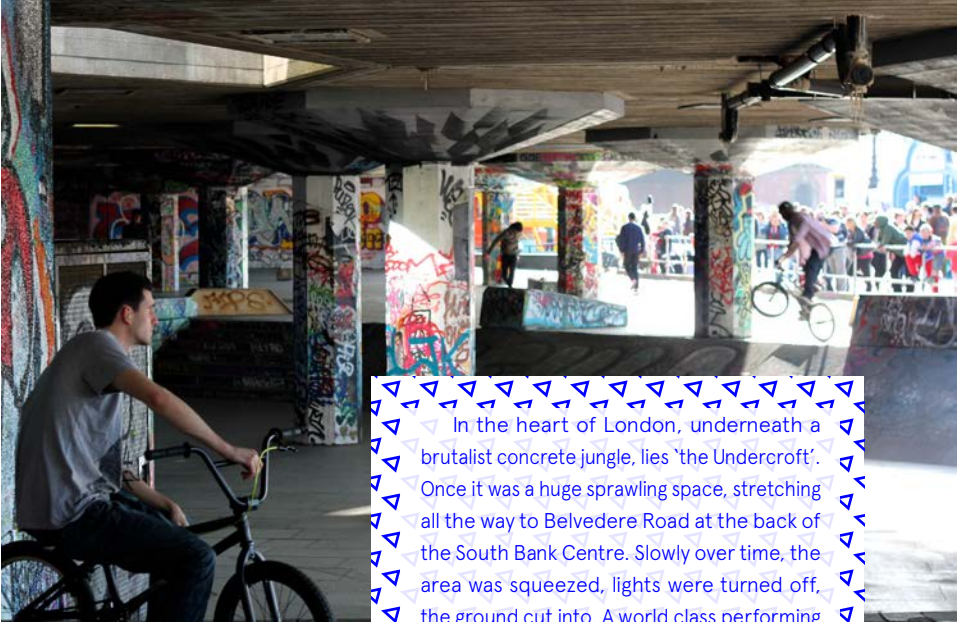






# SKATERS AT THE CENTRE OF THE WORLD

Recent plans to redevelop South Bank and move the skaters from the Undercroft of the National Theatre prompted over 40,000 objections - the largest number of objections to a planning application ever registered in the UK. In this photographic essay MArchD student [Matthew Gibbs](#) explores what skateboarders can teach us about space, identity and place.



In the heart of London, underneath a brutalist concrete jungle, lies 'the Undercroft'. Once it was a huge sprawling space, stretching all the way to Belvedere Road at the back of the South Bank Centre. Slowly over time, the area was 'squeezed', lights were turned off, the ground cut into. A world class performing arts centre has become tired of kids with skateboards.

Fifty years after the Festival of Britain, the Southbank Centre revealed plans for a huge development providing much needed space for the decaying venue, the Festival Wing. Designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios no one could have predicted the uproar that followed. Countless newspaper articles discussed the issue, and most surprisingly a group of skaters managed to create such a media frenzy that plans have been halted.

What promoted this uproar? The proposal planned to move the Skate park 120m from its current location anonymity under Hungerford Bridge. Its a skate park, nothing special you might say, but 'the Undercroft' is special. People have skated continuously there since 1973. It is part of skateboarding history and a unique spot, it is a place with identity.

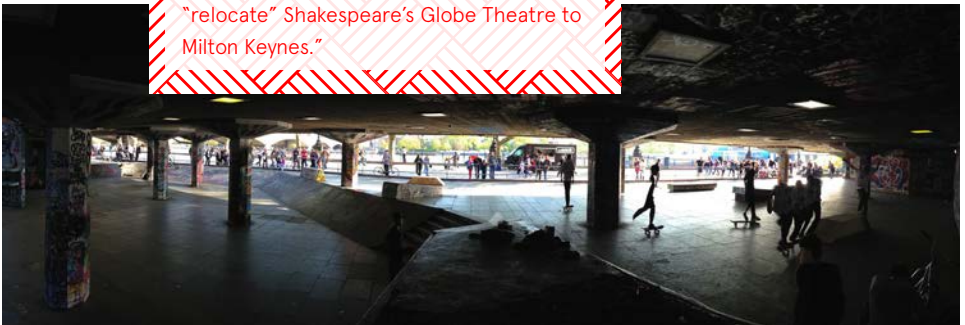




According to Relph, "It is clear that rather than being a simple address in a gazetteer or a point on a map, identity is a basic feature of our experience of places which both influences, and is influenced by, these experiences."<sup>1</sup>

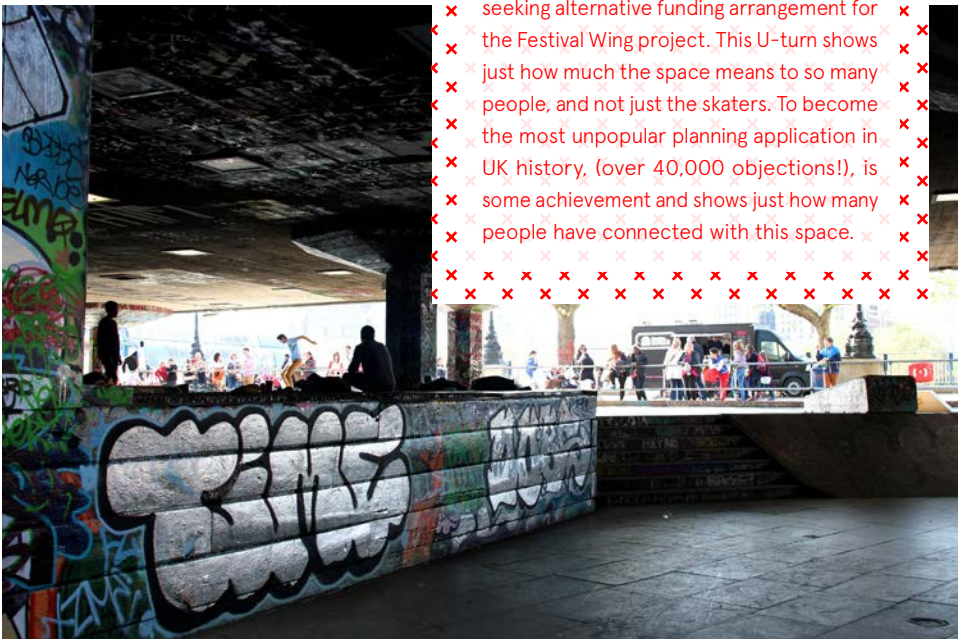
This implies that a space acquires its identity over time, more like the concept of patrimony. Patrimony is the inherited significance of (in this context) a space, rather than heritage, which can be said to be a creation of the present day viewpoint. One skater described it as follows,<sup>2</sup>

"Relocating the Undercroft to another site, even 120m away as the developers are proposing, would be like moving the famous zebra crossing on Abbey Road. It doesn't matter how faithfully you reproduce it, it would never be the same. The significance and meaning of the Undercroft — its importance to skaters and ex-skaters alike — is inextricably bound up with its location. You might as well "relocate" Shakespeare's Globe Theatre to Milton Keynes."





On May 29th 2014 the Southbank Centre released a statement saying that Arts Council England will fund 70% for the £25million of repairs needed to the building. The Centre is seeking alternative funding arrangement for the Festival Wing project. This U-turn shows just how much the space means to so many people, and not just the skaters. To become the most unpopular planning application in UK history, (over 40,000 objections!), is some achievement and shows just how many people have connected with this space.





Relph has grasped an eternal truth - identity is a phenomenon that evades simple definition. The Undercroft is a place of both patrimony and heritage, a unique space, as emphasised by Ben Powell, a skater talking for the Long Live Southbank Campaign. He said, "You can't replace culture and history with custom built facsimiles of what was there before, it's not the same thing."

**Matthew Gibbs** is a final year MArchD student at the Oxford School of Architecture specialising in Urban Design. To read the full essay go to [bit.ly/sk8rswrld](http://bit.ly/sk8rswrld)



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2. Young, T. 2014. Hands off the South Bank - I skateboarded there. London Evening Standard. Feb 10. p.10

23.9.14 Sunand Prasad  
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O X A R C H

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY



# CONVERSATIONS WITH SIKI IM

Third year BA Architecture student [Nimrod Wong](#) interviewed award winning men's fashion designer [Siki Im](#), a graduate of the BA (Hons) Architecture programme. The interview develops through Siki Im's personal tales regarding OSA's studio culture, the profession, the development of his style, and his influences.



**G**reat architects build structures that can make us feel enclosed, liberated or suspended. They lead us through space, make us slow down, speed up or stop to contemplate. Fashion designers in high fashion do the same; they devise, narrate and choreograph the

structure of clothes - along with theatrics to alter our perception, foretelling the ideas and the visions that reflect the contemporary world. I interviewed award winning men's fashion designer Siki Im, to discuss his views and stories in architecture, his training, and his time at OSA.

How would you describe your work to someone unfamiliar with it?

I think what's important to me is that my work is challenging, and proposes a new perspective on a certain genre and not in terms of saying this is the truth, right or wrong. It's just like a new, or a different type, of design language. So obviously the product, which is maybe the subject, is not as important.

It has to be remarkable and from the highest quality, no matter what it is. But I think what for me is the most important is beyond that. The same thing with architecture, it's not about buildings - it's about space. Fashion is not about garments, it's about that kind of physiological language, the same with other design languages; it's about certain aspirations, certain images, and certain worlds that I create.



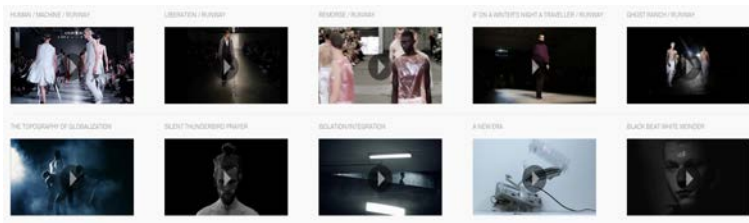
Coco Channel once said Fashion is architecture: it is a matter of proportions. What kind of cross-pollination do you think there is between fashion and architecture, if there are any?

Like I said, I don't think architecture is about buildings; it's not about brick and mortar. What we study, and what Matt was so good at, is to teach (especially me) that architecture is about space, it's so abstract it can be everything.

So, you know, it's psychology, it's political, it's anthropological and it's spiritual and it's the same thing with fashion, as I mentioned before, it's not just about garments. Of course, there is a certain sex appeal and proportions but it's something more, like there's a reason why you would want to wear that item of clothing from this set of a brand to the set of another brand. And so there are definitely similarities.

However, in terms of technicality, for instance...I always sketch from both the macro to the micro, for me proportion and silhouettes are very important, the exterior but also the interior. I think fashion designs do that, I sketch all the details like what kind of seams there are, how they're going to be sewn. There are so many different construction techniques for garments that can influence the make and not the feel, and that's very important to me.

The inside of a garment is as beautiful as the outside of a garment. It's the same thing in architecture, if you design a building, a lot of architects will neglect the bathrooms because they assume they are not important, but bathrooms are beautiful communal spaces. I love it when buildings are well thought through to every little detail, from the hand rail, to the lighting and then to the bathrooms, those kind of things.



You've worked with Karl Lagerfeld and Helmut Lang, what was that experience like? How did they receive your architectural training, background and approach?

I think they could definitely see that I was more structural in design and aesthetics with the garments I designed there. In the beginning, I loved draping; I always liked the relationship between drape and structure, as soft and hard was always important to me. So they definitely used me more for that and also for technicalities...I've learnt so much - because you know I never went to fashion school!

I NEVER WENT TO FASHION SCHOOL!



What were your favourite moments and experiences during your time at OSA?

I'm so fond of it – I remember my English really sucked when I came to England. I remember the first class; Matt was there. I had no idea what the fuck he was saying. You know, it's the Scottish accent; I thought it was some foreign subtitles.

One thing I remember he said at the beginning was "you have to be a prostitute." I don't know if he still says the same thing. But he's right, we are not artists, we can't live in a cave. I'll always remember that, and have taken it away with me. I still try to work on that, being a prostitute. We had such a good studio then... I have really fun memories of my time there.

ONE THING I'LL ALWAYS  
 REMEMBER IS SOMETHING  
 MATT SAID AT THE  
 BEGINNING: "YOU HAVE  
 TO BE A PROSTITUTE"



During your architectural studies, what particular kind(s) of architecture (figures, movements and architects) inspired and influenced your work the most?

You know, funny enough, I knew about Le Corbusier, Brutalism and the Bauhaus in high school, because I was into that. So I was always more of a minimalist; always clean, and people were always like 'oh, that's Siki's work,' you know.

At some point, maybe at the beginning of second year, I thought, man, that just kind of scary; I'm really young and people can already recognise my work – I'm going to improve or learn, right? ... I was really anti-computer growing up so I got really fascinated with all the notion of cyberspace, so all of this hyper surface Columbia shit, and I taught myself all this weird computer stuff. I remember making a weird jelly fish space as a building and I hated it! On the other hand, I loved it because it really made me become more open minded about techniques and aesthetics – it really helped me to challenge myself.

I WAS ALWAYS MORE  
 OF A MINIMALIST,  
 ALWAYS CLEAN  
 AND PEOPLE WERE  
 ALWAYS LIKE 'OH,  
 THAT'S SIKI'S WORK,'



S/S11 COLLECTION  
 Isolation/Integration



To the present day, how have these movements inspired your work in your designs and artistic vision?

I NEVER  
MADE THE  
SWITCH  
CONSCIOUSLY,  
I JUST  
WANTED  
TO DO  
SOMETHING  
DIFFERENT.

When did you realise you wanted to switch to fashion; what were the factors and defining moments that led to this change?

I'm the biggest Bauhaus fan, you know! It has influenced me tremendously. For me, Bauhaus, in terms of aesthetics, always had a certain honesty and a certain transparency about it. They wouldn't hide things, they didn't do meaningless decoration and I think that kind of notion I still keep with me all the time.

For example, our blazers are fully hand tailored, in a traditional way, as it would be with a canvas in front. So what we do is make the outside very clean, so you don't see any buttons and seams. On the inside, however, it has this sheer silicone organza, so you can see how the garment is made; all the imperfections, the hand stitching and the canvas. You know for me, that's a reference to what I've learnt from certain architecture movements.

I never made the switch consciously, like I said, for me I just wanted to do something different, try out something new, and trust me; it took me a long time to call myself a fashion designer. I still don't call myself a fashion designer, because, you know, architects are so arrogant.

I think architecture is universal – it's the highest design language and fashion is probably the lowest. It was never a conscious decision to change. But, at some point after five or six years, I realised that I actually enjoy designing clothes and making people happy or feel sexy, and found I was quite good at it. However, we are definitely planning for the strategy of our studio to go back to architecture and to do special designs.

A NEW ERA // 2010 COLLECTION

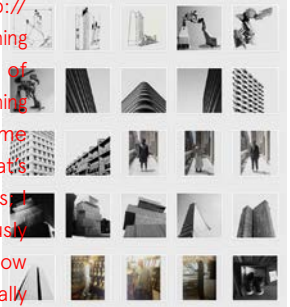


Which part of your career have you enjoyed the most thus far?

You know the great thing about fashion is that it's fast, you keep moving and challenging. Physically, you also get to travel a lot and work with so many different people from factories, PR, or sales. I think I enjoy that interaction. Maybe in the architectural environment it's less diverse.

If you created mood boards at this stage... what kind of images and materials would go on it? At the moment, what are you currently fascinated by and how is it feeding into your work?

You should check out my Instagram: <http://instagram.com/sikiim>. I get fascinated by anything - I don't like looking at other collections of clothes. I get more inspired by an air-conditioning unit or some forest or, I don't know, some details on a wall. It's usually something that's not finished and is still within the process. I love those in-between moments. Obviously I still go look at buildings, how it's made, how it's constructed; those kinds of things really influence me a lot.



[SIKI IM // INSTAGRAM](http://instagram.com/sikiim)

What's been your most satisfying project or collection to date?

Oh man, I'm so critical; to be honest with you, the collection that I showed just last week on Friday is I think a successful one. It's a pretty intense collection.

What is the SIKI IM Studio motto?

It's the Michel Foucault one, the philosopher, and it's the motto I used to start up my company. It is something I have kept with me and still think about. Basically, he said "The work of an intellectual is not to mould the political will of others; it is, through the analysis that he does in his own field, to re-examine evidence and assumptions, to shake up habitual ways of working and thinking, to dissipate conventional familiarities, to re-evaluate rules and institutions and to participate in the formation of a political will."

If you could turn back time, would you have studied fashion instead of architecture?

Architorture, you mean? No, for me, I'm very happy.

ARCHITORTURE,  
YOU MEAN?

**Nimrod Wong** is a third year architecture student in Unit J; with special interest in adaptive urban topologies, hybridization and the evolutionary role of the architect. See <http://nimrodwhatta01.tumblr.com/> for the full SIKI IM interview & other content.

# THE MONTAGE OF GAPS

Editor Lauren Kehoe considers the use  
of representation to construct a future  
architecture of two and a half dimensions

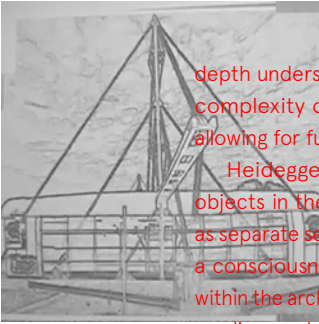
**T**he twentieth century has seen a shift in attitude towards the confines of space and time. Previously, space was defined by physical boundaries and time was continuous. Both were characterised by a series of dictating systems, portraying an all-seeing universe independent of individual experience. A revised experience of 'space-time', influenced by cubism and futurism, the growing film industry and the even the musical scores of Stravinsky, embraced the fragmented allowing freedom from universal continuity, and acknowledged the importance of the individual's viewpoint. That the understanding of an image can only be realised over time, is also true of physical spaces. This presents an opportunity to create new multidisciplinary architectures that combine data, light, sound, motion, structure and location into an entirely new environment; a 'moving architecture'

that portrays past, present and future.

In his book "Les Peintres Cubistes", Guillaume Apollinaire describes the cubists' rejection of the three dimensions of Euclidean geometry, advocating that "the fourth dimension endows objects with plasticity...it represents the immensity of space eternalising itself in all directions at a given moment." (!) Despite the cubist intentions to form a truer representation of the phenomenology of space, architecture remains fixed within traditional forms of orthographic projection. The highly finished collages produced by architects are often singular in both dimension and meaning. By allowing elements to escape from the flattened picture plane and form readable gaps, personal narratives and alternate perceptions can be explored through the ambiguity of their spatial representation.

Collage can provide an image that is not yet fully realised, enabling a more in

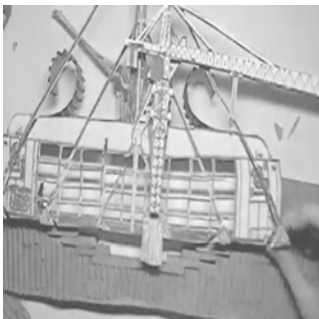
**DESPITE THE CUBIST'S INTENTIONS,  
ARCHITECTURE REMAINS FIXED**



depth understanding of the rich layering and complexity of the built environment, and allowing for futures to be re-imagined.

Heidegger asserts that we understand objects in the context of other objects, not as separate self-contained entities. Therefore a consciousness of these interrelationships within the architectural field allows for multiple readings and manipulations, which reveal new spatial compositions. Space, according to Heidegger, is bound to places by human activity and experience, so it is critical to understand the architectural 'ground' as more than space enclosed by political boundaries. Instead the ground must be read as a complex layered physical and cultural construct.

Current forms of architectural representation reveal a division in motive. The primary form



[OXFORD ICE RINK // COLLAGE](#)  
[PROCESS FILM STILL](#)

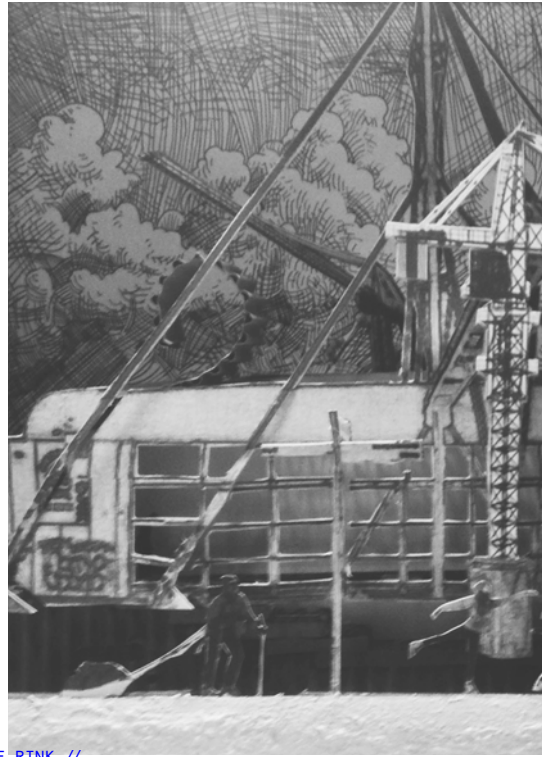
TANGIBLE QUALITIES  
 OF SPACE AND FORM  
 ARE ACKNOWLEDGED  
 AND EXPLORED  
 THROUGH MAKING

of architectural drawing that is produced by the majority of professionals in practice follows the traditional routine of plan, section and elevation. While these orthographical forms of depiction are well suited to the task of relaying information for construction or fabrication purposes, they lack phenomenological complexity. The systematic approach towards construction drawing is designed to prevent ambiguity or multiple interpretation by using detached forms of notation. Walter Benjamin goes as far to state, "the most essential characteristic of the architectural drawing is that it does not take a pictorial detour" <sup>(2)</sup>. As Lebbeus Woods comments, drawing is a mode of thinking "there are ideas and feelings that can only be expressed in drawn form. We might imagine, if we look at the caves of Lascaux, that drawing came before writing and was, in its narrative making of marks, its source" <sup>(3)</sup>. Both collage and drawing within architectural representation have the ability for the subjects to constitute a projected future. Whether or not that future is realised is not necessarily significant in this respect. The phenomenological construction of space lies within the depiction of the narrative.



From the geometrical ordering, minimalism and precision of Daniel Libeskind, Ben Nicholson, and James Corner to the utopian and dystopian visions of Superstudio, Archigram, and Time[scape] Lab, a value in the thickened thresholds and liminal spaces offer the potential for dialogue between the existing and proposed. Tangible qualities of space and form are acknowledged and explored through making. The partial transparency and layering of materials serves to engage a tactile quality within the work, provoking a varied interpretation of their output.

Architecture is no longer considered as a static process. Discussions are now formed around life span and reuse of spaces. The meaning of this past, current and possible

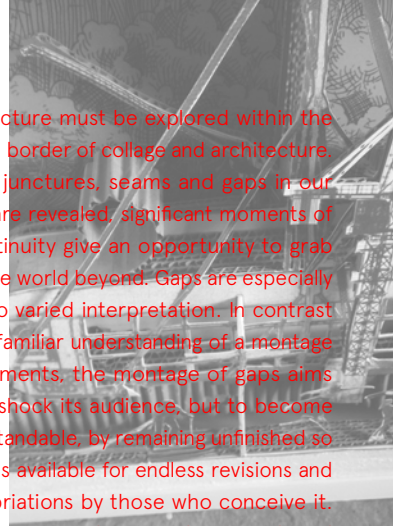


OXFORD ICE RINK //  
COLLAGE FINAL MODEL

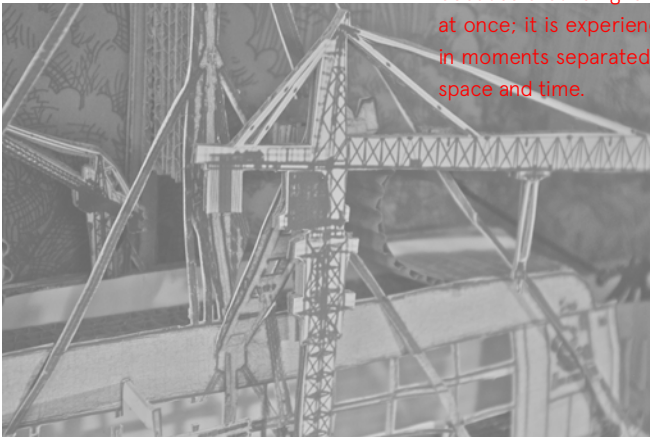
THE MONTAGE OF CAPS  
AIMS NOT TO SHOCK ITS  
AUDIENCE, BUT TO BECOME  
UNDERSTANDABLE, BY  
REMAINING UNFINISHED  
SO THAT IT IS AVAILABLE  
FOR ENDLESS REVISIONS  
AND APPROPRIATIONS


- 
- (1) LD Henderson, *The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1983, p. 355
  - (2) W Benjamin, translated by Levin, T. *Rigorous Study of Art*, The MIT Press, New York, 1988, p. 22
  - (3) L Woods 'Line' an entry on Lebbeus Woods Blog. Available at: <http://lebbeuswoods.wordpress.com/2008/05/05/line/> (Accessed 31 March 2014) (2008)





architecture must be explored within the blurred border of collage and architecture. As the junctures, seams and gaps in our world are revealed, significant moments of discontinuity give an opportunity to grab onto the world beyond. Gaps are especially open to varied interpretation. In contrast to the familiar understanding of a montage of fragments, the montage of gaps aims not to shock its audience, but to become understandable, by remaining unfinished so that it is available for endless revisions and appropriations by those who conceive it. In the montage of gaps authority is shared between the producer and the user. This fracturing of the picture plane is particularly appropriate to user creativity in architecture because a building is not experienced all at once; it is experienced piece by piece, in moments separated by divisions in both space and time.

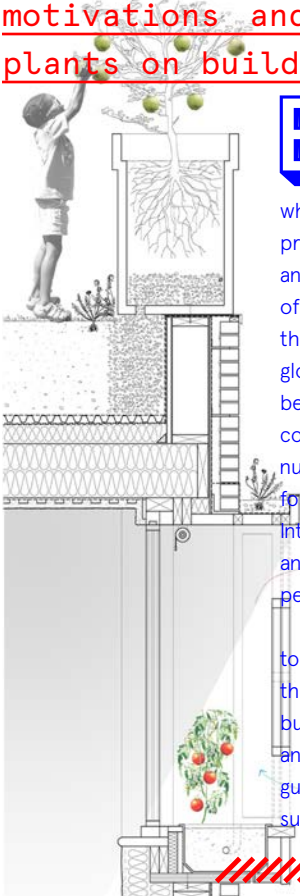


  
**Lauren Kehoe** is a final year MArchD student and  
 Editor & Art Director of OSA Magazine.



# EDIBLE ARCHITECTURE

PhD candidate Mina Samangooei is investigating the motivations and barriers to cultivating edible plants on buildings in the UK.



**B**uildings are responsible for approximately 40% of total UK Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. The integration of vegetation with buildings is a common technique used in sustainable design, which increases energy efficiency and comfort levels of a building (due to protection from weathering, cooling and shade), storm water retention and biodiversity. This research looks at an additional step; the integration of edible vegetation with buildings. Our current food system is one of the key contributors to climate change where it accounts for 13.5% of global GHG emissions and 20% of GHG emissions in the UK3. Seeing and being involved with food production educates people about where food comes from and increases knowledge of food-related environmental and nutritional issues. The competition between land for buildings and land for food production in urban areas is ever increasing as populations rise. Integrating food production as part of buildings helps alleviate this conflict and also makes food production highly visible amongst urban dwellers; people spend 90% of their lives inside buildings.

My research is focusing on the behaviour of urban dwellers in relation to growing food on buildings, where the research question is "What are the motivations and motivational barriers to cultivating edible plants on buildings in the UK?" Investigating indicators that may affect motivation and behaviour in order to fill this gap in knowledge, which can give some guidance for anyone who is planning to integrate edible plants with a building successfully and sustainably.



*Mina Samangooei is a PhD candidate at Oxford School of Architecture where she also studied for her Part I & II. I and Part II qualifications. She has recently successfully transferred from MPhil to PhD.*





# DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Final year MArchD student Wardululu Alsaffar shares her photographs of Digital Revolutions, the recent exhibition at the Barbican Centre which chronicled the influence of technology on our culture, in particular new modes of interactive art.



VISITORS BECOMING PART OF A  
dynamic live artwork

**T**he recent exhibition at the Barbican Centre, Digital Revolution, was a visual and interactive display of the history of the developments of technology spanning the last forty-five years. Highlighting the role of technology across the creative disciplines of film, music, art and architecture, it brings us up-to-date on how the digital has integrated into the fabric of our lives.



LIVE MUSIC EXPERIENCE  
Will.i.am's eyes are  
always on you



IN THREE STAGES, PEOPLE'S ARM MOVEMENTS ARE  
projected as wings, which then take flight

PLUMES OF SMOKE POUR OUT FROM THE EYES  
of those who face the installation

BODY MOVEMENTS ARE TRACKED  
and processed into a dancing  
cartoon projection

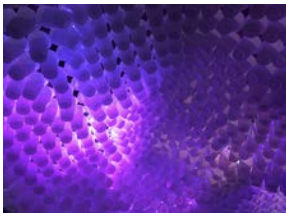


**Wardululu Alsaffar** is a final year MArchD student. She is the producer of a new art, architecture and design based radio show Ccconcurrents and is searching for presenters to help with the show. To get in touch go to [facebook.com/Ccconcurrents](https://facebook.com/Ccconcurrents)



# BRAINSTORM

DS2 & DS7 'Superstudio' Tutors Lucas Che Tizard,  
Ciarán O'Brien, and Lionel Real de Azúa present  
their recent installation 'Brainstorm'.



# BRAINSTORM

AN INSTALLATION DESIGNED BY RED DEER

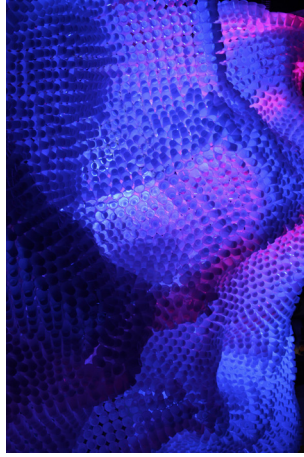
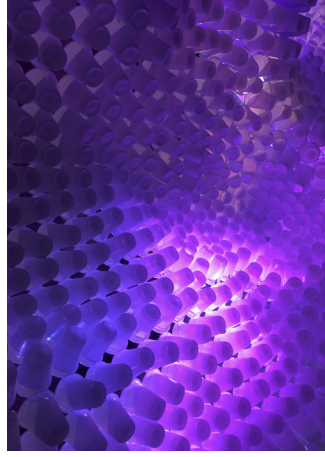
IN COLLABORATION WITH AMAZZIE



III  
NESTIL HOUSE

AMAZZIE





Netil House is a community made up of 300 creative individuals. Brainstorm represents this creative community and its design thought by encapsulating the notion of 'thinking' and the power of collective consciousness within a physical installation.

"Brainstorming is a group or individual creativity, a technique by which efforts are made to find a conclusion for a specific problem by gathering a list of ideas spontaneously contributed by its member(s). The term was popularised by Alex Faickney Osborn in the 1963 book applied imagination. Osborn claimed that brainstorming was more effective than individuals working alone in generating ideas, although more recent research has questioned this conclusion."

In the summer of 2014, Red Deer worked in conjunction with event, sound and lighting designers Amazzle to create this installation in the foyer of Netil House.



**Red Deer** are architects who draw on various disciplines to reanimate design. Inspired by craftsmanship + making, painting, film + digital processes, the workshop critically engages with materials, detail and project briefs to introduce elements of playfulness, tactility and the unexpected to every project.



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interactive content

# MEATCHUTE

Third year BA Architecture student **Sem Karahan** spent part of his summer working on the set of **Meatchute**, the latest film from Hurtwood Prize nominee **Tom Shennan**.

Meatchute is a short 10 minute film directed by Hurtwood Prize nominee, Tom Shennan. The film draws from the absurdism of Samuel Beckett's plays. In a waterlogged husk of a building, the characters decompose, piece by piece, into ash and while a mysterious chute protruding from the ceiling supplies them with the fresh new limbs and organs, they need to rebuild themselves.

The main aspect of the set design was the Chute. The budget was £100, but I was able to create it with £20 by hand rusting recycled bolts and cinnamon (for the rust patina).

It was an amazing experience to be a part of such a talented team and having the opportunity to realize Tom Shennan's outlandish vision!



IN ACTION SHOT, (FROM LEFT to right) Kevin Johnson and Oliver Coward

THE CHARACTERS  
DECOMPOSE, PIECE  
BY PIECE...



**Sem Karahan** is a third year BA (Hons) Architecture student in Unit F. For more information about the film see <http://www.simplyoxford.com/oxford/oxfordmeatchutebehindthescenes> and <http://www.tomshennan.co.uk/>





IN ACTION SHOT. (FROM LEFT TO right) Connie Wookey as Jenny, Oliver Coward, Ruth Curtis as Evelyn and Tom Shennan



RUTH CURTIS AS EVELYN



KEVIN JOHNSON AS BOB

Director - Tom Shennan  
Assistant Director (AD) - Rodeo Whiter, Grace O Donnell  
Cinematographer - James Buckland and Oliver Coward  
Set Design - Sem Karahan  
Make up artist - Katie Johnson and Anusha Mistry  
Actors - Ruth Curtis as Evelyn, Kevin Johnson as Bob,  
Connie Wookey as Jenny and Dominic Wolf as Maxwell  
Runners - Sarah Thewlis and Kieron Tufft  
Boom Operator and sound - Tom Pratt and Adam Breeze  
Set Photographer - Nasir Hamid and Sem Karahan

# (A) SPACE REVISITED

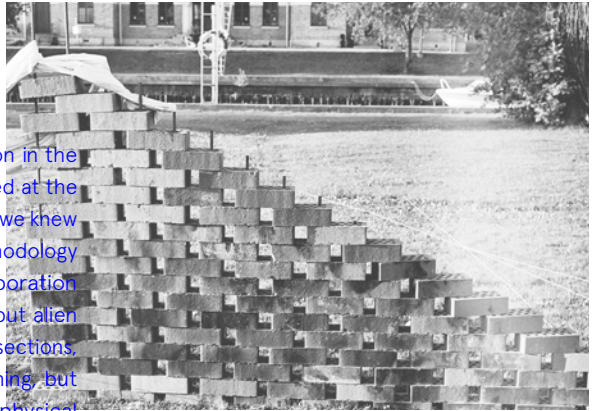
In a recent interdisciplinary project in Söderhamn, Sweden, members of the group [Gang of Six](#) (formed in the melting pot of the first year studio) participated in a collaboration with two musicians, Johan Jutterstrom and Linda Olah, two dancers, Toby Kassel and Ingeborg Zackariassen and visual artist, Andreas Larsson.

The central idea of the project was to produce a piece of hands-on public art in which each artistic discipline participated in the work through a full collaboration with the others. The project lasted for a week, and took place in a public park in the centre of the small town, Söderhamn. The aim was not to produce a 'finished' piece of work ready for performance, or public viewing, but more that the week itself was an organically evolving, unexpected and temporal production. To this end, there was no pre-fabrication of building elements, pre-composed musical pieces, or choreographed dance routines. The spatial choreography occurred on site, in an intuitive, dynamic, but silent dialogue between the artists.





For us, the mode of production in the project '(a) Space Revisited' existed at the edge of the field of architecture as we knew it. The idea of constructing a methodology through improvisation and collaboration was at once familiar in concept, but alien in practice. There were no plans, sections, elevations or details at the beginning, but a set of material components, a physical toolbox, and a mental tool kit. The participants from each discipline had their own tool kits, comprising skills and experience gained from years of work in the field.

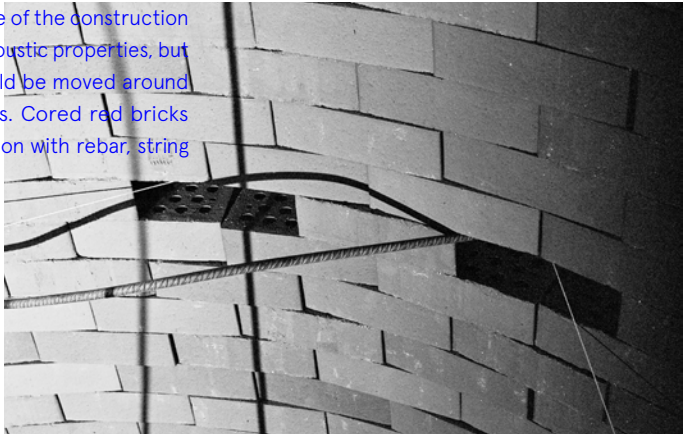


FOR US, THE  
 MODE OF  
 PRODUCTION IN  
 THE PROJECT  
 EXISTED AT  
 THE EDGE OF  
 THE FIELD OF  
 ARCHITECTURE  
 AS WE KNEW IT





We decided to approach this brief with a system for constructing rapidly, but temporarily, on site. We chose to use a palette of materials that spoke the language of the construction site, had contrasting acoustic properties, but were modular and could be moved around in many configurations. Cored red bricks were used in conjunction with rebar, string and white fabric.

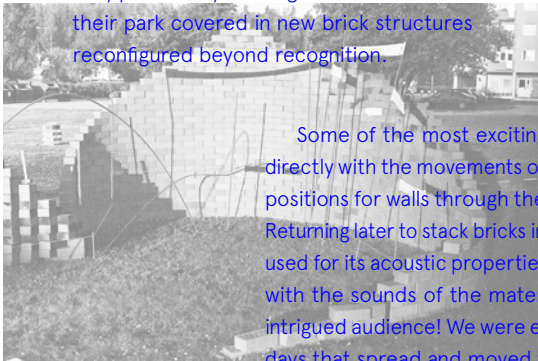


As the structures would take on many different forms throughout the week, as we dismantled and re-assembled them in to new configurations, we wanted to try to leave traces of what was left behind as the week went on, so we turned to soot as a material in itself. Many of the initial structures became brick fire pits, set up through the first few days to produce blackened edges and faces, which would be visible in later constructions as remnants of a previous moment.





In a sense, the project was a week-long occupation of the park. It served to provoke the locals into thinking about familiar spaces in new ways, it was largely unannounced, and landed in the park like an invasion. It stimulated discussion, and people revisited the site throughout the week, either as daily passers-by or intrigued visitors, to find their park covered in new brick structures reconfigured beyond recognition.



Some of the most exciting moments came in working directly with the movements of the other artists, staking out positions for walls through the movements of the dancers. Returning later to stack bricks into an enclosure that was then used for its acoustic properties by a musician experimenting with the sounds of the materials. All under the eye of an intrigued audience! We were engaged in a dance over seven days that spread and moved through the park organically. We'd never produced live architecture under the watchful eye of an audience, and it was an invigorating and tense experience. For us, this was architecture as performance, and architectural choreography, in the purest sense, and opened up endless possibilities to experiment within the expanding field of architecture.

IN A SENSE, THE  
 PROJECT WAS  
 A WEEK-LONG  
 OCCUPATION  
 OF THE PARK



**Gang of Six** is an architectural design & make collective of seven OSA graduates, consisting of Jack Hardy, Shaun Ryder, Joe Giddings, Joseph Penn, Ewan Cashman, Jack Czase & Josh Molnar. Apparently Gang of Six sounded better.

Visit [www.gangofsix.co.uk](http://www.gangofsix.co.uk) and [www.aspacerevisited.com](http://www.aspacerevisited.com) for videos and more.





**9-12<sup>TH</sup>**  
**OCTOBER**  
2014

**OXFORD  
CITY  
CENTRE**

# HOUSE OF THE COMMONS

**CORE THEMES:**  
ROOT CAUSES OF  
THE CRISIS  
LAND: OWNERSHIP,  
USE + VALUE  
ALTERNATIVE  
MODELS  
BUILDING FOR THE  
FUTURE  
RESISTANCE  
MODELS + TACTICS

DANNY DORLING  
STEPHEN HILL  
JAMES MEADWAY  
RADICAL HOUSING  
NETWORK  
UK COHOUSING  
NETWORK  
NATIONAL CLT  
NETWORK  
RADICAL ROUTES  
SQUASH  
UK RENTERS  
THREE ACRES AND  
A COW  
PETE THE TEMP

**FOUR  
DAYS**  
OF TALKS,  
WORKSHOPS,  
SKILL-SHARES  
+ ACTION

**EXPLORING  
CREATIVE  
SOLUTIONS  
TO THE  
HOUSING  
CRISIS**

41



# NOW: THE FINAL FRONTIER

OSA Graduate Will Fisher argues that for architecture to remain relevant, it must engage with the present instead of looking to the future



**F**ifty years ago it was 1964, which was a somewhat eventful year. Mohammed Ali hit a man on the head, Mary Poppins stepped on some chalk, and a much younger Mick Jagger told everyone that time was on his side. Time, if it even exists, is a bit of a tricky one, partly due to our overly simplified perception of it. We have the “past”, the “present” and the perpetual antagonist that is the “future”. Past Jagger wrote a song whereby the then present Jagger postulated that time was on his side. We can assume that time, in the context of the song, refers to future time; therefore we witness either a man passing comment on the nature of his own existence through song, or if you’re feeling particularly imaginative,

Mystic Mick's prediction of the future. Today, if we so wish, we can listen to past Jagger's lyrical forecast, in our present, as a recording of the past. Pause the song half way through and promise to start it again and not die, and you could accurately state that in the future you will hear the end of the song. You prophet.

Contrast, if you will, a mental picture of the fresh faced Stone with a more recent version. Was he right?

To understand if time is on your side, first we need to think about what time actually is and its relationship to reality. There are three competing schools of thought on the realities of existence in relation to time: 'Presentists' say that only present objects and present experiences are real. To take my previous example, 20-year-old Jagger no longer exists because we cannot go back in time and give him a stern talking to about a music video he is yet to make for Dancing in the Street with David Bowie. However, according to 'Growing-past' theory, the past and present are both real, but the future is not. This is because the future hasn't happened. So 20-year-old Jagger is real because we can see low quality videos

of him on the internet, and present Jagger exists because he's still alive and still grooving about on the telly. The third theory is that there are no objective ontological differences between past, present, and future because the differences are simply subjective. This third theory is called "Eternalism". So one would say, viewed from the position of eternity... Mick Jagger.

Most of us, if pushed would probably casually align to either the presentist or growing-past view as doing so is a damn sight easier than trying to live one's life from the unbiased perspectiveless position of eternity, but we also get into trouble by doing so as we prejudice our decisions on notions of history. It's easy to argue that history is useful; we learn from our mistakes, or so we say, but perhaps we also default to them as an unconscious safety mechanism. We may not repeat catastrophic failings, at least not in the short term, but sometimes to simply adjust or modify can be far easier than to totally rethink, and even if we do this, it is hard to rethink without simply applying our acquired, usually flawed methodologies in new ways. Nietzsche describes this as the 'eternal return', where in infinite time and

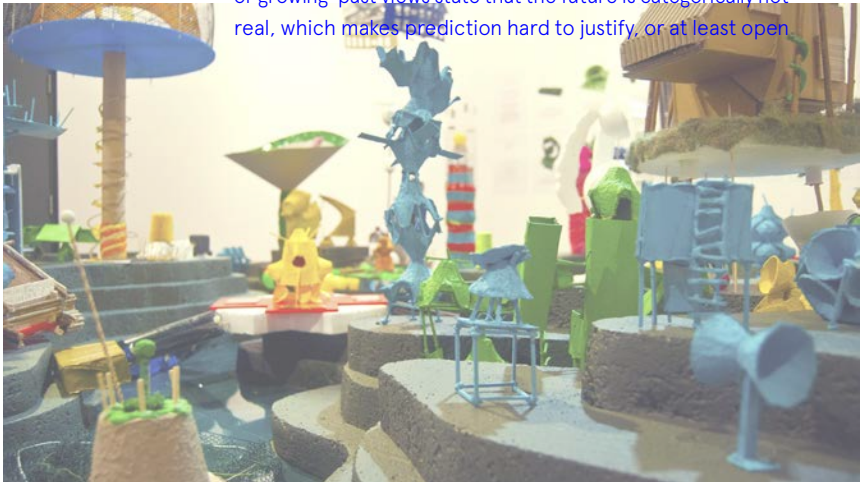


space, events will recur again and again. As Heidegger describes, this is 'the most burdensome thought'.

I mention all of this following a project I recently worked on called 'Designing the Future', which involved workshops with secondary school children where they spent a few days doing just that. Over the course of the week I spent about half of my time discussing new forms of urbanism, the causes and consequences of ecological disaster and why you shouldn't touch the hot end of a glue gun. The other half was spent saying the words 'in the future' on repeat like a scratched record. My retrospective and growing discomfort with this term has led me to question our attitude as designers with regards to the future.

Is it possible that to speak of the future is simply laziness, or at least a blasé stance from which to try to design from, in that it can often become detached from our daily view of reality? That is not to say that we can't comprehend the future, its importance, or potential issues related to it, but is it garnished with a layer of intangibility that disconnects us from its importance, particularly when discussing or pondering the distant future?

Much like the distant past, the distant future is too far away to matter, or so it feels now anyway, and the presentist or growing-past views state that the future is categorically not real, which makes prediction hard to justify, or at least open





PEOPLE ARE SCARED  
OF REVOLUTION  
BECAUSE IT REQUIRES  
US TO CHANGE THE  
PRESENT STATE  
OF THINGS; FROM  
THE POSITION OF  
ETERNITY, THIS IS NO  
LONGER A CONCERN

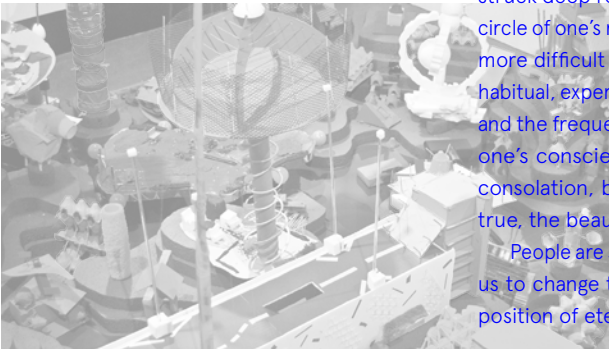
engage with culture and our received and rehearsed appreciation of quality, entertainment or whatever else. But there are issues that are too important to let such things get in the way.

The Greek proverb goes, 'Society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in'. Is this the eternalist view of time in a nutshell? What world could we create if we were to reject the common notions of past, present and future, and instead adopted this view of time as not just an integral feature of our design approach, but also the way we behave, operate as a society and live on a daily basis? And what if we were to apply such thinking to our planet and our ecology?

Well these are difficult issues, and as such to attempt to tackle them requires great upheaval and great risk; it requires money, is pretty much guaranteed to cause stress (which is bad for your health), courage and personal sacrifice. Let's ask however, does truth lie on the side of the difficult or the easy?

In his 'letter to his sister', Nietzsche says: "...is it really so difficult simply to accept everything that one has been brought up on and that has gradually struck deep roots - what is considered truth in the circle of one's relatives and of many good men? Is that more difficult than to strike new paths, fighting the habitual, experiencing the insecurity of independence and the frequent wavering of one's feelings and even one's conscience, proceeding often without any consolation, but ever with the eternal goal of the true, the beautiful, and the good?"

People are scared of revolution because it requires us to change the present state of things; from the position of eternity, this is no longer a concern.



**Will Fisher** graduated from the BA (Hons) Architecture programme in 2010 before taking his MA at the RCA. He is one third of PUG, whose work can be found at [www.whatispug.com](http://www.whatispug.com)



# SIMSHAR: ARCHITECTURE & FILM

Stephanie Spiteri discusses her experiences of working as a set dresser on Maltese film, 'Simshar' and how the process of film making has influenced her architectural understanding.



SET OF SIMSHAR / DETENTION CAMPS



rchitecture by nature is interdisciplinary, drawing inspiration from several other mediums – traditionally engineering, construction and art. The architect can also learn a great deal from the design process of film making; techniques such as script breakdown, character profiling and analysing historical trajectories enable the creative department to emulate highly detailed sets, specific to the characters they house. A carefully constructed scene gives the audience a fabricated glimpse of another world. After working as a set dresser on the feature film 'Simshar', I've learned to adopt the same rigorous approach to scenic research in my architectural design in order to create highly phenomenological spaces driven by a strong sense of narrative.

SET OF SIMSHAR //  
DETENTION CAMPS



To watch the trailer go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnOLsCGV8XQ>

or for more information:

[www.facebook.com/simshartheilm](http://www.facebook.com/simshartheilm)



SET OF SIMSHAR // BEHIND THE SCENES



[SET OF SINSHAR // SET DRESSING](#)



[SET OF SINSHAR // PERSONAL POSSESSIONS](#)



**S**imshar, co-written by Rebecca Cremona and David Grech, was inspired by true events and is Malta's first feature length film for an international audience. It is a story of bravery, fear, shortcomings and forgiveness. The two-tired plot focuses on the 2008 Maltese fishing boat explosion, whilst in another part of the Mediterranean we witness the debated future lives of African migrant's stuck between nations. The stories unravel in parallel and end with disastrous consequences when the fishermen are spotted and mistaken for immigrants.

# RADICAL PEDAGOGIES

Principal Lecturer Harriet Harris provides  
a synopsis of her forthcoming book, Radical  
Pedagogies: Architectural Education and the  
British Tradition, co edited with Daisy Froud



rchitectural education is largely considered to be both complex and costly. To graduate, our indebted talent into unpaid internships is the Darwinian equivalent of a professional species eating its young. It amounts to both an ethical as well as economic crisis. Yet there's never a better time than a 'crisis' to be thoughtfully innovative and take the initiative.

Creative schools in general – and schools of architecture in particular – confront enormous challenges and disruptions from market forces, pervasive technologies and government policy shifts. By nature of its proximity to practice, 'Professional' education is more susceptible than other disciplines to act as the academic barometer of these shifts. It is little wonder that students can loose their footing in such an unstable learning landscape.

The anticipated reduction in the duration of architectural education in both the UK and across Europe has engendered a sense of collective openness to exploring other models of professional education delivery. The forthcoming book, Radical pedagogy: architectural education and the British Tradition – edited by Brookes Principal lecturer Harriet Harris & civic practitioner Daisy Froud – responds to this

challenge. Featuring voices as varied as digital strategists, students and client managers, it offers an unrivalled array of philosophically, politically and practically prototyped possibilities, contextualised within the historic tradition of UK architectural education.

The drivers behind the need for curricula change – whether coming from industry, schools, students, SCHOSA or wider society – are identified and discussed, framing a series of questions about not only why but how radical change can and already is taking place. The book also raises questions about where we might situate architecture schools. Should they be inside or outside the HEI institution or located practice offices? Who should teach architecture – professors, practitioners or peers? Should architecture remain a discipline-silo informed only by the demands of professional practice or should it evolve into something more nebulous and interdisciplinary? The book is unashamedly concerned with British architectural education, seeking to account for why it is the most exported architectural curriculum in the world – a statistic that proves indicative of the global esteem with which it is regarded.



# RADICAL PEDAGOGIES ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION AND THE BRITISH TRADITION

Edited by Daisy Froud & Harriet Harriss

SHOULD ARCHITECTURE  
REMAIN A DISCIPLINE-SILO  
INFORMED ONLY BY THE  
DEMANDS OF PROFESSIONAL  
PRACTICE OR SHOULD IT  
EVOLVE INTO SOMETHING  
MORE NEBULOUS AND  
INTERDISCIPLINARY?

RIBA  Publishing



# TECTONIC TRANSMISSIONS

Jennifer Steel reports on the growth of podcasts  
as the new frontier of architectural journalism.

**W**hile architectural journalism has always a common career path for architects and alienated ex architecture students alike; podcasting, like zines before them are providing a new underground arena for the budding architectural journalist.

Now the idea of a purely auditory way to convey ideas about design; a primarily visual medium, might just seem crazy but trust me it works. Take 99% Percent Invisible,<sup>1</sup> the short design/built environment podcast produced by the brilliantly named Roman Mars. This isn't the equivalent of a Dezeen article devoid of all the images, it's a lovingly produced piece of sound design and architectural storytelling.

Podcasts have covered everything from Fire Egress, High Heels, An Abandoned Buckmeister Fuller Geodesic Dome, Revolving Doors and Currency Design, but using modern techniques akin to the work of much bigger. The mainstream shows such as the phenomenal This American Life,<sup>2</sup> Mars manages to make every subject astoundingly interesting. As they put it, "We look for the cool thing inside of the boring thing"<sup>3</sup>. In other words the show looks to explore the otherwise invisible design within the deceptively ordinary world.

Through 99PI you can learn about the history of figure disruption camouflage something, which was used on the 'razzle dazzle' ships in the first world war. This is a modern recreation which is currently on display on the HMS President in London. A practice that meant that fleets of ships were described as looking like 'a flock of sea going Easter eggs'.<sup>4</sup> You'll also hear how Milton Glaser; designer of the I NY logo, received a cease and desist letter for breach of copyright for redesigning his own pro bono work.

If you listen to Debbie Millman's Design Matters<sup>5</sup> you might have heard about Glaser, along with Vignelli, Sagmeister, plus a host of upcoming designers who are interviewed on her show out of the School of Visual Arts, NY. Unlike 99 PI, Millman takes a more traditional interview approach to podcastry but her intense understanding of design means the outcome is no less rewarding.

Like blogs, podcasts are able to be much more niche than mainstream radio, which unlike a subscription magazine they can be unexpectedly interdisciplinary, since they aren't relying on consumers to purchase the product. In this way they can provide another level of inspiration, quite separate to the world of traditional architecture

For example, This American Life recently presented a factual account by way of a musical, and 99 PI featured a reading of the novel *Wild Ones*<sup>6</sup> with its associated bluegrass soundtrack<sup>7</sup>. This must be the first time a band has produced a soundtrack for a book.

Architecture and design podcasts should not only be considered as source of inspiration but also a research route. DnA8 has covered drones; a subject regularly a topic of architecture design projects in the current climate, while The Business of Architecture<sup>9</sup> covers the practice

While the world of podcasting is becoming increasingly more mainstream there is still lots to explore in relation to architecture. Many smaller podcasts are created in people's bedrooms every week and there is nothing to stop anyone from spawning a similar masterpiece on a subject of and their own research. If you consume one piece of architectural journalism this week, make it a podcast... and if you catch the bug maybe try making one yourself. Serious kudos to the first person that submits a piece of work in podcast form within the architecture school!

**Jen Steel** is a final year MArchD student at the Oxford School of Architecture.



1. [www.99percentinvisible.org](http://www.99percentinvisible.org)
2. [www.thisamericanlife.org](http://www.thisamericanlife.org)
3. R Mars, Contact [Online] [www.99percentinvisible.org/contact/](http://www.99percentinvisible.org/contact/)
4. R Mars, Razzle Dazzle. (2012) [Online] [www.99percentinvisible.org/episode/episode-65-razzle-dazzle/](http://www.99percentinvisible.org/episode/episode-65-razzle-dazzle/)
5. [www.designobserver.com/article.php?id=9617](http://www.designobserver.com/article.php?id=9617)
6. J Moaalem, Wild Ones: A Sometimes Dismaying, Weirdly Reassuring Story about Looking at People Looking at Animals in America. Penguin (2013)
7. Black Prairie, Wild Ones . Captain Bluegrass (2013)
8. [www.kcrw.com/news-culture/shows/design-and-architecture](http://www.kcrw.com/news-culture/shows/design-and-architecture)
9. [www.businessofarchitecture.com/business-of-architecture-podcast/](http://www.businessofarchitecture.com/business-of-architecture-podcast/)

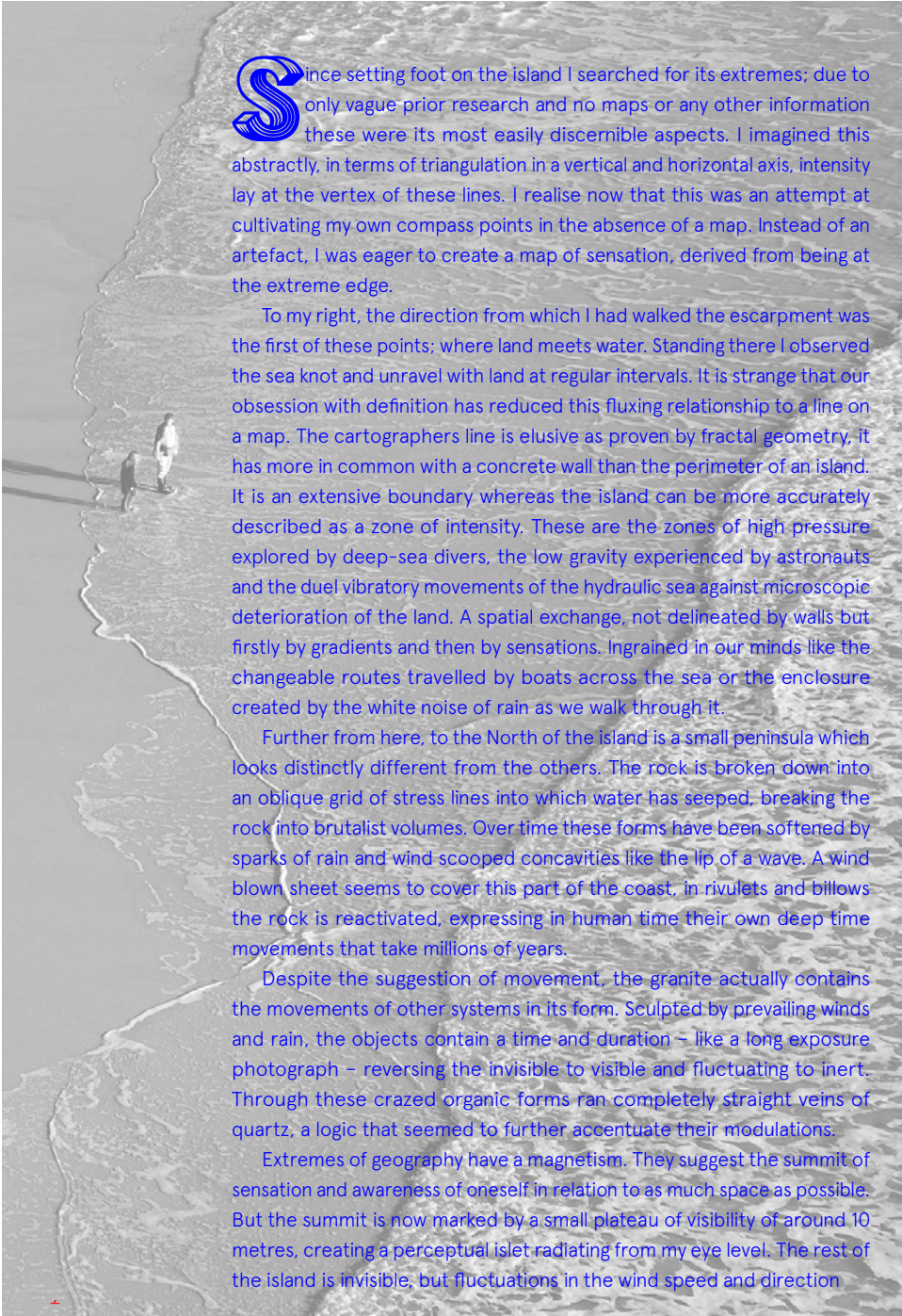
# ARCHITECTURE AS NEW GEOGRAPHY - A LENS IN THE LANDSCAPE

The Devil's Island, or as it's more commonly referred to, Asinara, is a small island just off the North-Western tip of Sardinia. Extremes, intensity and innate geometry led OSA graduate [Matthew Turner](#) through a light rain and the blind enclosure of the clouds to the highest point on the island. Here is an extract from his journal on the relationship between architecture, geology and geography.



ASINARA ITALY, VIEW FROM HIGHEST POINT//LANDSCAPE INTERVENTION

[DEFINING THE ISLAND//ZONES OF INTENSITY](#)



Since setting foot on the island I searched for its extremes; due to only vague prior research and no maps or any other information these were its most easily discernible aspects. I imagined this abstractly, in terms of triangulation in a vertical and horizontal axis, intensity lay at the vertex of these lines. I realise now that this was an attempt at cultivating my own compass points in the absence of a map. Instead of an artefact, I was eager to create a map of sensation, derived from being at the extreme edge.

To my right, the direction from which I had walked the escarpment was the first of these points: where land meets water. Standing there I observed the sea knot and unravel with land at regular intervals. It is strange that our obsession with definition has reduced this fluxing relationship to a line on a map. The cartographers line is elusive as proven by fractal geometry, it has more in common with a concrete wall than the perimeter of an island. It is an extensive boundary whereas the island can be more accurately described as a zone of intensity. These are the zones of high pressure explored by deep-sea divers, the low gravity experienced by astronauts and the dual vibratory movements of the hydraulic sea against microscopic deterioration of the land. A spatial exchange, not delineated by walls but firstly by gradients and then by sensations. Ingrained in our minds like the changeable routes travelled by boats across the sea or the enclosure created by the white noise of rain as we walk through it.

Further from here, to the North of the island is a small peninsula which looks distinctly different from the others. The rock is broken down into an oblique grid of stress lines into which water has seeped, breaking the rock into brutalist volumes. Over time these forms have been softened by sparks of rain and wind scooped concavities like the lip of a wave. A wind blown sheet seems to cover this part of the coast, in rivulets and billows the rock is reactivated, expressing in human time their own deep time movements that take millions of years.

Despite the suggestion of movement, the granite actually contains the movements of other systems in its form. Sculpted by prevailing winds and rain, the objects contain a time and duration – like a long exposure photograph – reversing the invisible to visible and fluctuating to inert. Through these crazed organic forms ran completely straight veins of quartz, a logic that seemed to further accentuate their modulations.

Extremes of geography have a magnetism. They suggest the summit of sensation and awareness of oneself in relation to as much space as possible. But the summit is now marked by a small plateau of visibility of around 10 metres, creating a perceptual islet radiating from my eye level. The rest of the island is invisible, but fluctuations in the wind speed and direction



occasionally open up monolithic vistas which cut across the landscape. A secondary sea of cloud passes tightly over the island's gradients, an exaggerated and de-materialised offset rendition, adding to them a velocity and changing density.

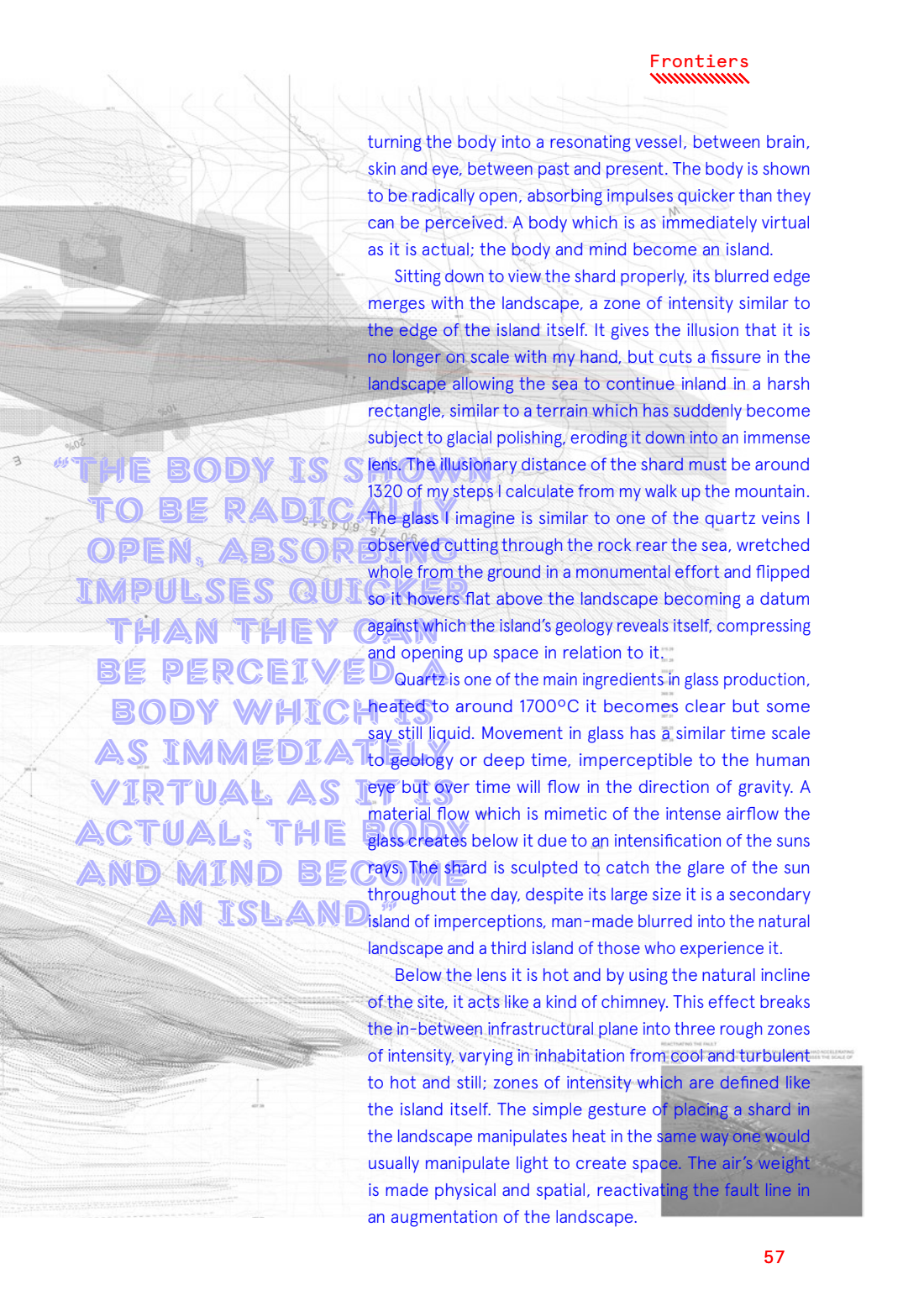
Finally, most of the cloud disappeared, laying the island out for a few moments like a simple logical map. An expanse of small shrubs and barren rock that after observation, like when the eye becomes accustomed to a dark room and within the initial void others of a lighter and darker quality open out, became punctuated by shades of man-made intervention. A vernacular infrastructure created not by direct intention, but by the passing of time.

I feel in my pocket for a rock I picked up at sea level, a shard which has the appearance of water frozen mid flow with an eddy in the middle, made up of different crystalline strata pushed through and against each other. The striations visible in the shard are also present in the large folds which stretch down towards the sea parallel to where I am standing. This immediately creates a mental constellation between the two locations giving the sensation that my centre of gravity and place is shifted to a point high above the two locations. The landforms and the rocks they are created from are some of the oldest in Italy, dating from around 950 million years ago. Their current manifestation is due to the massive fault line these two regions of the island sit on; extending the realms of geographical connection beyond that of my imagination, running along into Italy and then onto the rest of the world.

On my walk up the mountain I had picked up a piece of glass and wondered which of the prisons that scatter the island it had come from and who had looked through it, dreaming of escape. Now discarded, it had started to pick up flickers of light, the random beams intersected with my eye as I pace towards it. My pupils struggle to adapt to the quick changes of light intensity, opening up vistas of imperception in time with my step. Instead of the brain and eye editing out the infinite complexity of my environment, nature was now doing this, creating a kind of white noise.

A visual shock is not processed by the body in the normal chain of action and reaction, it is outside of normal consciousness, a misplaced half second. The event happens and our body tells us about it afterwards in vibratory event,





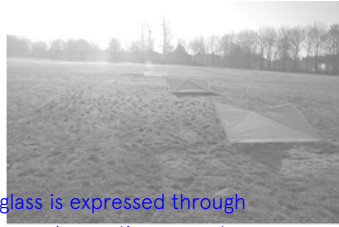
turning the body into a resonating vessel, between brain, skin and eye, between past and present. The body is shown to be radically open, absorbing impulses quicker than they can be perceived. A body which is as immediately virtual as it is actual; the body and mind become an island.

Sitting down to view the shard properly, its blurred edge merges with the landscape, a zone of intensity similar to the edge of the island itself. It gives the illusion that it is no longer on scale with my hand, but cuts a fissure in the landscape allowing the sea to continue inland in a harsh rectangle, similar to a terrain which has suddenly become subject to glacial polishing, eroding it down into an immense lens. The illusory distance of the shard must be around 1320 of my steps I calculate from my walk up the mountain.

The glass I imagine is similar to one of the quartz veins I observed cutting through the rock rear the sea, wretched whole from the ground in a monumental effort and flipped so it hovers flat above the landscape becoming a datum against which the island's geology reveals itself, compressing and opening up space in relation to it.

Quartz is one of the main ingredients in glass production, heated to around 1700°C it becomes clear but some say still liquid. Movement in glass has a similar time scale to geology or deep time, imperceptible to the human eye but over time will flow in the direction of gravity. A material flow which is mimetic of the intense airflow the glass creates below it due to an intensification of the sun's rays. The shard is sculpted to catch the glare of the sun throughout the day, despite its large size it is a secondary island of imperceptions, man-made blurred into the natural landscape and a third island of those who experience it.

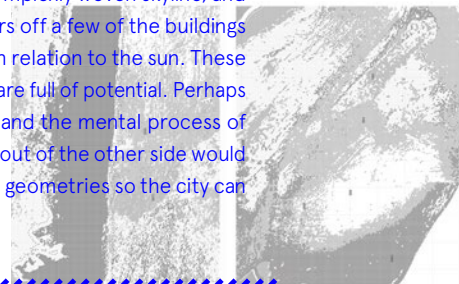
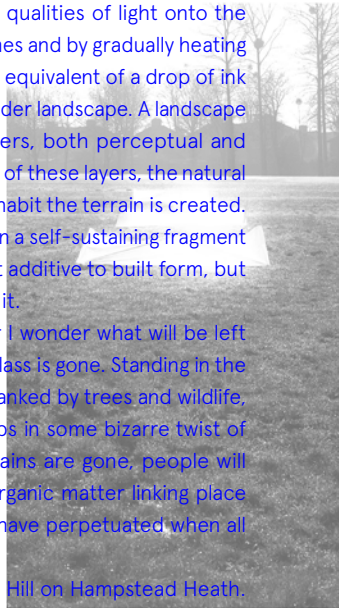
Below the lens it is hot and by using the natural incline of the site, it acts like a kind of chimney. This effect breaks the in-between infrastructural plane into three rough zones of intensity, varying in inhabitation from cool and turbulent to hot and still; zones of intensity which are defined like the island itself. The simple gesture of placing a shard in the landscape manipulates heat in the same way one would usually manipulate light to create space. The air's weight is made physical and spatial, reactivating the fault line in an augmentation of the landscape.



The blur at the edge of the glass is expressed through function. The lens facilitates a new ecology acting as a water catchment, reflecting different qualities of light onto the surrounding area at different times and by gradually heating the surrounding earth; the built equivalent of a drop of ink in water, bleeding out into the wider landscape. A landscape which is made up of many layers, both perceptual and physical, and at the intersection of these layers, the natural and man-made, a new way to inhabit the terrain is created. After an initial violent intervention a self-sustaining fragment is left, a sustainability that is not additive to built form, but one which is our experience of it.

On a train a few weeks later I wonder what will be left of the infrastructure once the glass is gone. Standing in the middle of the carriage it is embanked by trees and wildlife, an alien sight in the city. Perhaps in some bizarre twist of history after the tracks and trains are gone, people will look upon these striations of organic matter linking place to place and wonder why they have perpetuated when all else is edifice.

My destination is Parliament Hill on Hampstead Heath. From here I can see London's complexly woven skyline, and as the sun goes down it shimmers off a few of the buildings that share the same geometry in relation to the sun. These small glimmers are not voids but are full of potential. Perhaps if one were to project the light and the mental process of experiencing it through a prism, out of the other side would come a way of connecting these geometries so the city can also become an island.



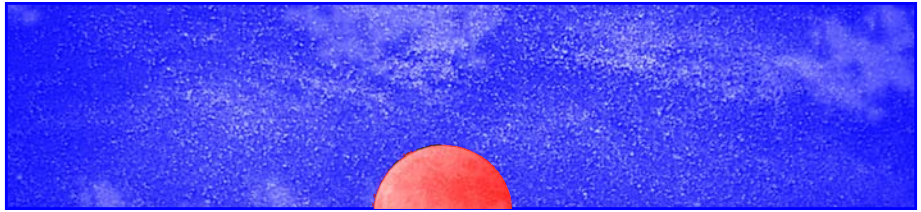
**Matthew Turner** is a graduate of the Oxford School of Architecture. His final year project was nominated for the RIBA Bronze Medal in 2013.



LEFT//INSTALLATION// LANDSCAPE VECTOR

RIGHT//MAN-MADE AND NATURAL FAULT LINES

BOTTOM//AUGMENTATION OF SITE ROCK INTO A MATERIAL TYPOGRAPHY



# TO BOLDLY GO...

The final frontier that architecture has not managed to conquer, is space.

**W**ith minimal human presence, space can be seen as one environment in which architectural elements currently have little, or no, impact. It is only a matter of time until architecture will begin to occupy this final frontier.

Research into the development of architecture through the writing of spaces was undertaken to establish the link between the written word and the formation of architecture. An understanding of how architecture can be formed through the use of descriptive texts and the use of the imagination helped to form a number of design principles. The narrative nature of science fiction and the formation of its architectures was a direct influence on the choice of developing an architectural proposition through a series of narrational storyboards. The project archives the life and works of the science fiction author Arthur C. Clarke, whilst drawing inspiration from science fiction architecture. It aims to question

whether architecture of today helps to form the designs and ideas of the future through influence, inspiration and experiences gained.

The final submission for the research-led design project produced a series of storyboards exploring and developing the design proposal through an illustrative style. The series of images form a comic book that explores and develops the architectural proposition, through a narrational journey of the space.

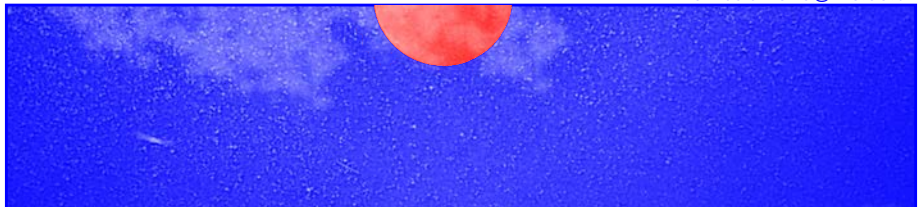
The series of images form a comic book that explores and develops the architectural proposition, through a narrational journey of the space.



**Lewis Clarke** is a stellar second year MArch student at the Oxford School of Architecture.

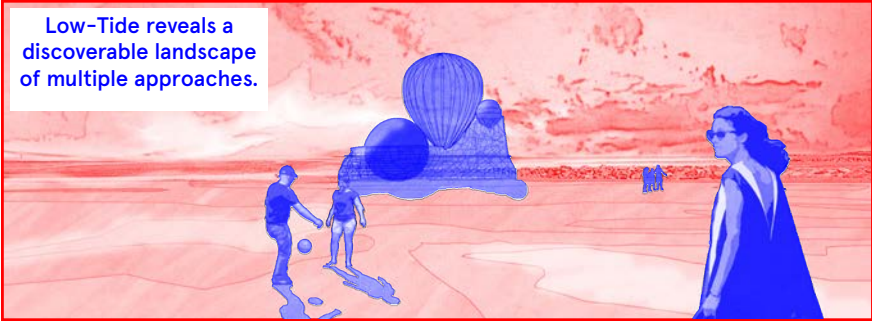


E: [lewisclarke23@live.co.uk](mailto:lewisclarke23@live.co.uk)

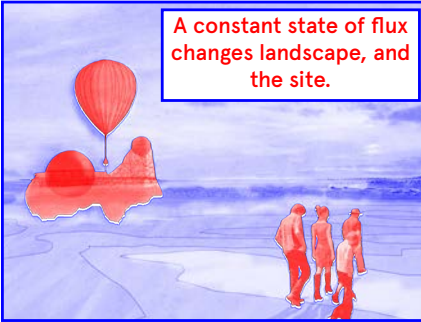




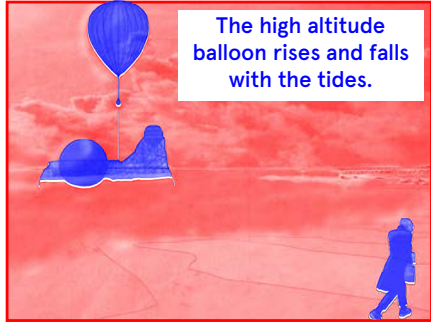
Low-Tide reveals a discoverable landscape of multiple approaches.



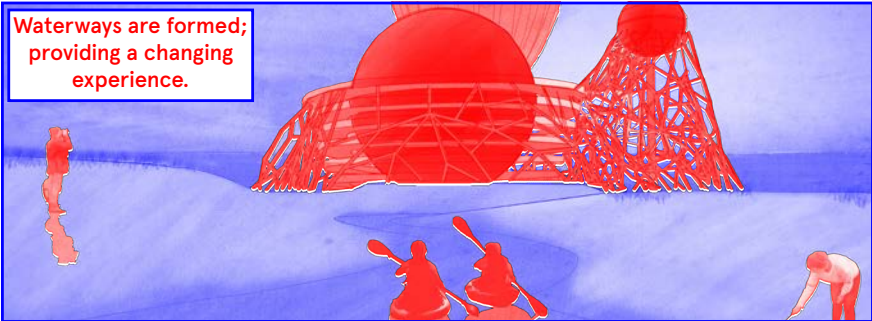
A constant state of flux changes landscape, and the site.



The high altitude balloon rises and falls with the tides.



Waterways are formed; providing a changing experience.

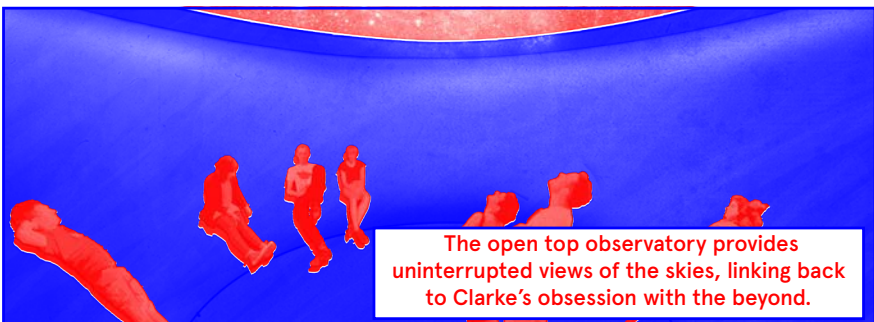
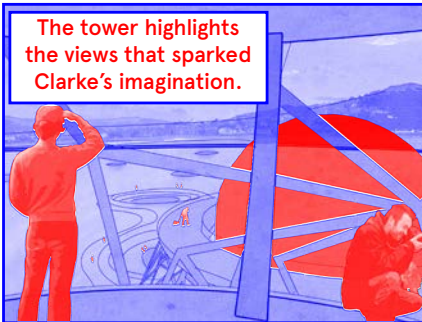
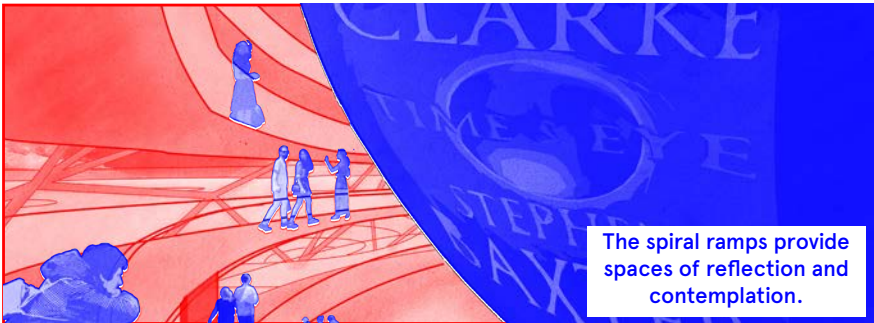
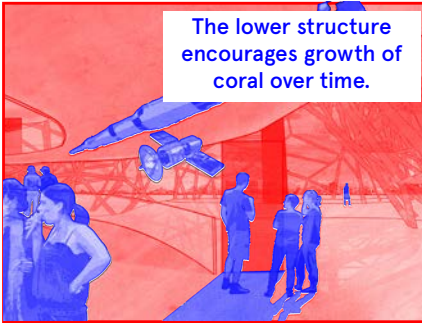


Raised walkways surround the structure underneath the mesh.



The ball allows visitors to explore space through videos.







# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR ISSUE TWO:

# FAILURE

"Many of life's failures are people who  
did not realise how close they were to  
success when they gave up" - Thomas Edison

OSA is an independent, collaborative, student produced publication, conceived as a platform for enabling and documenting the conversations and agendas occurring within the Oxford School of Architecture. Each issue encourages original submissions from current students, recent graduates and staff around an evolving theme.

## FAILURE:

In OSA's second issue we will embrace, celebrate and discuss failure.

We live in a world full of various forms of failure. Global economies are hindered by the financial consequences of widespread banking failure. Unsuccessful political regimes and failing foreign policies have led dozens of countries into lengthy wars. The failure of 20th-century business, design and planning models, including multiple examples within the architectural profession, are creating the conditions around which new strategies, projects and forms of practice are emerging.

We've also noted with growing concern an increase of conservative tendencies amongst our peers. Burdened with ever higher levels of debt they take fewer and fewer risks, the ambitions of their design research growing smaller and smaller. We want to cherish and

nurture our culture of experimentation by celebrating the avenues of exploration that went unfulfilled, the experiments that didn't work, the 'dead ends' discovered along the path of our design projects.

Architectural histories and theories have focused on narratives of individual intellectual and cultural success, but the overwhelming part of an architect's working life is spent working with failure: for every project realised, dozens fail to reach their completion. All movements and styles are eventually outdated by their successors. Hundreds of entries in a design competition are losers, while a single proposal is selected and judged as the winner.

## WE ARE SEEKING:

Articles, opinions, interviews, essays, critiques, manifestos, how-to's, drawings, models, diaries, poems, fiction, projects, buildings, reviews, photo essays, travel diaries, details, contracts, infographics, collages, videos, reflections and anything else that you can think of, especially unsuccessful experiments.

## HOW TO SUBMIT:

Please send a short 100-300 word abstract or thumbnail images describing what you would like to submit in response to the theme to [submissions@osa.ink](mailto:submissions@osa.ink) by the 16th October.

DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACTS: 16TH OCTOBER

# THE ARCHITECT LAUGHS LAST

The days of architectural design without compromise are gone and dead; the common story of the architect gaining recognition through building is now a lie that was once a truth. It is currently often the case that the architect laughs first as the others watch his smirk fade.

No other field deals with impotence of the final product more than architecture, causing the field to split in two: some build, and the rest draw. Young architects that once started out with a small house as their entry into the profession have become superfluous pavilion designers, finding themselves on the margin of everything. We will soon see the architect laugh last, as the word architecture will no longer sound like a bad one. The architect typically aims for reality and settles for fiction. We aim for fiction because trilogies and skin flicks would be ailing businesses if the difference between reality and fiction, did not for a moment, seem inconsequential.

We practice fiction and fictionalise  
practice not in Los Angeles - the city

recognized by codes, zones, and middlemen  
- but rather in LA, the schizo-mythological  
ego that is never allied with, but always  
hovers above Los Angeles. LA is familiar with  
our type, but not our message.

Fiction is a term loaned to architecture from literature, but that does not keep us from using it. Trained as architects, we are not ashamed to borrow from other mediums. Fiction, as described here, is a lie or a convincing joke... an unfact that is true until proven to be a leg-pull.

Architects must embrace fiction, if not for the fact that it has always been our specialty and often our true mode of practice. The gap between earnest photography and photoshopped images or renders is narrowing; it is our place as architects to mine this gap and confuse the legitimacy of the 'completed' project. 'Fiction' and 'reality' will be terms that we hope will one day sound like white noise - pornography will be sex, and the War of the Worlds might as well have really happened- but we must expose and practice these terms before exterminating them for good.

**Tall** is: Kyle Branchesi, Shane Reiner-Roth, Jing Yan,  
three graduates from SCIArc in California



OSA Vol.1 Issue 1: Frontiers

October 2014

Architecture as a New Geography

Beyond Architects, Beyond Architecture

Brainstorm // Digital Revolution

Edible Buildings // Gang of Six

House of the Commons // Meatchute

Now: The Final Frontier // Radical Pedagogies

Renegade Writers // SIKI IM

Simshar // Skaters at the Centre of the World

The Architect Laughs Last

The Montage of Gaps // Tectonic Transmissions

To Boldly Go

